

## RELIGION AS AN AGENCY OF PATRIARCHY - WOMEN & RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

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### ABSTRACT

*In this paper it is intended to express, articulate and analyze the Impact of religion on women's rights and its implications on society.*

*Women are always considered as the harbinger of Religion and its practices. However, it has always been a barrier to women's rights and has imposed illogical norms and barriers concerning her life thus depriving her of her basic right to live with dignity. All religions, be it Judaism, Jainism, Christianity, Islam, Confucian views or Hinduism all have demeaned women beyond the religious purview and have provided a lower status due to her reproductive cycle. This natural phenomenon has been viewed as something unnatural and impure despite the fact that it plays a vital role in reproduction and has kept out of all religious activities. Patriarchy has garnered such beliefs and has made women ignorant about their rights thereby making them submissive and unquestioning. This has made women weak and confused, thus preventing them to question the said norms. If this is the condition of the upper caste educated women, then one can imagine the status of Dalit women and downtrodden section. They are doubly exploited – one due to the social stratification and other due to the position they hold in their own community. Apart from these due to the religious identities and its practices, customs and thinking, women's role in social activities have also been considered negligible as also responsible for her oppressive condition. This article, which is a part of the doctoral thesis has been able to capture some key factors concerning religion and women's rights. Women's organizations of different political parties (Congress, BJP, CIP (M) ) and civil society groups with varied ideologies were taken up for study and the results analyzed using SPSS software. Chi Square test, Anova tests were conducted to verify the results and accordingly the tables, charts and pie-diagrams are interpreted.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Confucian, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Patriarchy, Reproductive Cycle*